

## **REP. BECERRA ON REPUBLICAN PLAN TO END WORKER RETRAINING PROGRAM**

WASHINGTON, DC—Important changes to the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, an initiative in existence since 1962 that retrain and assists workers whose jobs have been outsourced overseas to transition into new jobs, expired on Saturday, February 12. The new Republican majority in the House has decided to effectively roll back the improvements to the program by refusing to allow a vote on renewing TAA in its current form. Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus, released the following statement in response:

**“After six weeks in the majority, House Republicans are making their priorities quite clear. No jobs bill to speak of. No committee hearing on jobs. Not a single action to promote jobs in America.**

**Now, they are doubling down. They are going to pull the rug out from under American workers whose jobs have been shipped overseas by letting a proven, effective program expire that helps them retrain, retool and transition into a new job.**

**The new majority shouldn’t play chicken with the well being of trade-impacted working families by threatening to tie this indispensable program to a trade deal that still needs to be fixed.”**

The TAA program was amended in 2009 as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to include assistance to service sector workers whose jobs had been outsourced. It also increased the support to cover the cost of health care for displaced workers from 65 percent of premium costs to 80 percent.

Since the reforms were implemented in 2009, more than 170,000 additional trade-impacted workers became eligible for training opportunities and benefits under the new elements of the TAA for Workers program. In total, more than 406,000 workers were certified as eligible for TAA support in that timeframe. In FY2010 alone, more than 227,000 workers took advantage of TAA and participated in the program, receiving case management, training and/or income support.

Unless Congress acts, the 2009 TAA reforms will sunset on February 19, 2011. Going forward, workers like the 170,000 workers who were certified as eligible for TAA under the expanded provisions included in the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Act of 2009 will not qualify for benefits. Less than two months ago, legislation that included an 18-month extension of TAA passed in this House with broad bipartisan support and the endorsement of the AFL-CIO and the Chamber of Commerce, among others.